be less in the states of Bihar, West Bengal and M.P because of late blight disease and less water availability in M.P. Onion prices increased primarily on account of the floods in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and the heavy rain in Maharashtra, which affected the kharif crop of onion and its supply to markets across the country.

(d) The Government has taken steps to protect poor sections of society through Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antodaya Anna Yojna (AAY). Under the TPDS, wheat, rice, coarse grains and kerosene are allocated to State Governments/UTs for distribution through the Fair Price Shops. The Central Issue Price for rice and wheat has not been revised since 2002. For wheat it remains at Rs 4.15 per kg for BPL and Rs 2 per kg for AAY. For rice, it is Rs 5.65 per kg for BPL and Rs 3 per kg for AAY. Pulses are distributed to the State Governments under the PDS @ Rs.10 per kg subsidy scheme. In view of the rise in prices of essential commodities witnessed during the recent past, Government has allocated imported edible oils to State/UT Governments. States are free to distribute the oil through whatever outlets they decide on.

Establishment of branches of foreign educational institutions

†2520. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether foreign educational institutions have proposed to establish their branches in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any assessment has been made about their effect on the educational institutions of the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (e) A legislative proposal to regulate Entry and Operations of foreign educational institutions in India is under consideration of the Government.

Complaints regarding corrupt activities of officials of AICTE

2521. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any complaints regarding involvement of officials of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) in corrupt activities for the last two years;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof and action Government has taken thereon; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by Government to stop such malpractices in such educational councils?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Complaints alleging corruption have been received against officials of AICTE. Some cases have been referred to CBI which has registered various cases against officials of AICTE including its then Chairman and Member Secretary. In other cases AICTE has been asked to submit a report.

(c) The Government has taken the following steps to enhance transparency in the working of the Council:-

(i) Steps have been taken to introduce e-governance system in the AICTE.

(ii) The approval process handbook is being modified to remove the inconsistencies and the scope for different interpretations.

(iii) The Appellate Committees have been strengthened with people of the level of Vice-Chancellors (current and former).

Raising of marks for appearing in IIT- JEE

2522. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present minimum limit of 60 per cent marks for entrance examination (IIT-JEE) is proposed to be raised so that students' focus of study becomes achieving higher percentage of marks in 12th class rather than concentrating on studies received from coaching centres imparting specialized tuitions for appearing in such an examination;

(b) if so, whether broad spectrum of views from varied faculty members of such IITs have been considered for this proposed raising of higher percentage in 12th class; and

(c) whether this will not come in conflict with introducing scheme of awarding 'grades' than 'marks'?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) The Joint Admission Board (JAB), which consists of representatives from all the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian School of Mines (ISM), Dhanbad and Institute of Technology - Banaras Hindu University (IT-BHU) as well as a representative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, makes recommendations in respect of matters relating to the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE). A Review Committee has been set up by the JAB to give its recommendations regarding factoring in of class Xli results on a percentile basis while deciding admissions into IITs. Integrating class XII results with JEE results would help reduce the dependence on coaching centres.